



Birds of Aruba



Page 9

Cas di Torto



Page 7

Lessons from our elders: Plants and fruits for medicinal use



Page 11

United unveils new "Relax Row" for long-haul comfort

Wednesday, March 25, 2026

CHICAGO — The long-standing dream of stretching out in economy class is finally becoming a reality. United Airlines officially announced its new "United Relax Row" on Tuesday, a design that allows passengers to transform a standard row of three economy seats into a lie-flat, couch-like surface.

The innovative seating option, which marks a first for North American carriers, is specifically designed to provide relief for travelers on grueling international routes. By adjusting the leg rests to a 90-degree angle, passengers can create a "lie-flat mattress-like space" to sleep or lounge comfortably during flight.



A prototype of the United Airlines economy Relax Row seating is displayed during a media event showcasing the airline's new premium "Elevated" aircraft interior at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) in Los Angeles, California, on March 24, 2026.

A new tier of comfort

The Relax Row is positioned as a middle ground for those seeking more space without the high price tag of Business or First Class.

Target Audience: United describes the product

as ideal for families with small children, couples, or solo travelers who want to stretch out.

Capacity: Each aircraft will feature up to 12 designated Relax Rows, located between the standard

Economy and Premium Plus cabins.

Amenities: Passengers booking these rows will receive a custom-fitted mattress pad, specially sized blankets, and extra pillows. Families with children will also receive a plush toy and a kids' travel kit.

Fleet-wide expansion

While the announcement has generated significant buzz, travelers will have to wait a little longer to experience it. The official rollout is slated to begin in 2027.

United plans to equip more than 200 of its Boeing 787 Dreamliner and Boeing 777 widebody aircraft with the new seating by 2030. The airline holds North American exclusivity on the design, though similar "couch" concepts have been used

internationally by carriers like Air New Zealand and ANA.

The price of peace

Despite the excitement, one major detail remains under wraps: the cost. United has not yet disclosed the pricing structure for the Relax Row. Industry analysts speculate it will likely be offered as a premium add-on to standard economy fares, allowing passengers to reserve the entire row for a set fee.

As United moves toward a more "premium-heavy" fleet, the Relax Row represents a significant shift in how airlines are approaching the economy experience turning one of travel's most stressful environments into a space that actually lives up to its name. □

First Robot: Melania Trump brings droid to White House event

Washington, United States U.S. First Lady Melania Trump brought a surprise guest to a White House event on Wednesday -- a walking, talking, humanoid robot.

Instead of husband President Donald Trump at her side, it was the "Figure 3" android that accompanied Melania down the famous red carpet.

The 55-year-old Melania,

whose signature focus as first lady is on AI and digital spaces, was hosting a summit on empowering children with educational technology.

"Thank you First Lady Mel-

nia Trump for inviting me to the White House," said the gray-and-black robot, gesturing with its hands in its brief opening remarks. It then walked off the way it came.

est son, 20-year-old Barron, went on to talk about how humanoid-based artificial intelligence would soon be used to educate children.

"Imagine a humanoid educator named Plato. Access to the classical studies is now instantaneous," she said.

"Predictably, our children will develop deep critical thinking, and independent reasoning abilities."

Melania Trump has been taking on an increasingly public-facing role in recent months, after being an initially elusive presence at the White House early in her husband's second term. □

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U.S. First Lady Melania Trump walks with a humanoid robot as she arrives for the Fostering the Future Together Global Coalition Summit in the East Room of the White House in Washington, DC, on March 25, 2026.

Local math teacher honored as 'Sporting Samaritan' for lifelong dedication to students

KANSAS CITY — In the world of high school mathematics, the variables usually consist of X's, Y's, and complex equations. But for Patti Erneste, a veteran educator with over three decades of experience, the most important variable has always been the well-being of the person sitting behind the desk.

On Wednesday, that dedication was recognized on a grand scale as Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City (Blue KC) and Sporting Kansas City officially named Erneste the Blue KC Sporting Samaritan for March 2026. The award, which honors teachers and students who make a significant impact on their communities, highlights Erneste's unique ability to turn a traditionally stressful subject into a sanctuary of support.

A legacy of three decades
Erneste's career spans more than 30 years a tenure that has seen shifts in curriculum, technology, and teaching



philosophy. Yet, through every change, her core mission remained fixed: creating a non-judgmental learning environment. For many students, math is a source of anxiety, a "wall" that stands between them and graduation. Erneste's classroom at Park Hill South High School, however, has become known as a place where that wall is systematically dismantled.

"Math is just the medium," said one former student who nominated Erneste for the award. "What she's actually teaching is confidence. She makes you feel

like your worth isn't tied to the grade on the paper, but to the effort you put in and the person you are becoming."

The "safe space" philosophy

The "Sporting Samaritan" award specifically recognizes Erneste's commitment to mental health and emotional safety. In an era where teen stress and academic pressure are at an all-time high, Erneste has pioneered a "person-first" approach.

Her classroom is more than just a place for geometry and calculus; it is a safe

haven. Colleagues note that Erneste is often the first person at the school in the morning and the last to leave, frequently staying late to offer not just tutoring, but a listening ear to students navigating the complexities of adolescence.

"Patti has this incredible gift for seeing the student who is struggling silently," says a fellow faculty member. "She doesn't just want them to solve for X; she wants to make sure they have the tools to solve the problems they face outside of school, too."

A surprise recognition

The announcement came as a surprise to Erneste, who was lured to what she thought was a standard faculty meeting. Instead, she was met by representatives from Sporting KC and Blue KC, along with a roar of applause from students and staff.

As part of the honor, Erneste will be recognized on the pitch during an upcoming Sporting Kansas City home match at Children's Mercy Park. The award also includes a donation to the school's mathematics department, ensuring that her legacy of support continues to reach future generations.

"I am truly overwhelmed," Erneste said, wiping away tears during the presentation. "I've always believed that if a student feels safe and cared for, the learning will follow naturally. To be recognized for simply loving my students is the greatest honor I could receive." □

KID smART opens state-of-the-art center for arts and education

NEW ORLEANS — The historic Tremé neighborhood, long considered the heartbeat of New Orleans' musical and cultural heritage, added a vibrant new chapter to its legacy today. Under a bright mid-day sun and to the rhythm of a celebratory brass band, the nonprofit organization KID smART officially cut the ribbon on its new Center for Arts and Education.

The 10,000-square-foot facility, located in a beautifully restored mid-century building, represents a \$5.5 million investment in the city's youth. For over 25 years, KID smART has operated as a "nomadic" organization, placing teaching artists in public schools across the city. Today, they finally have a permanent North Star.

Bridging the gap through creativity

The mission of the new center is clear: to prove that the arts are not an "extra" in education, but a fundamental tool for learning. The facility features three multi-purpose classrooms, a digital media lab, a community gallery, and a professional development suite for local educators.

"We aren't just teaching kids how to paint or dance," said Elise Gallinot Goldman, Executive Director of KID smART, during the opening ceremony.



"We are teaching them how to use those tools to solve math problems, understand history, and process their own emotions. This building is a laboratory for the imagination."

A resource for Tremé and beyond

While the center will serve as a hub for student workshops and after-school programming, it is also designed as a community asset. The ground-floor gallery will showcase the

work of New Orleans youth alongside professional local artists, creating a literal "pathway to the profession" for aspiring creators. Local residents were invited to tour the facility today, many expressing relief that a neighborhood synonymous with jazz and civil rights history is receiving a modern space dedicated to the next generation of culture-bearers.

"In New Orleans, our culture is our greatest resource," said Tremé resident and parent Marcus Washington. "To see a professional-grade center like this right in our backyard tells our kids that their creativity has real value. It's not just a hobby; it's a future."

Empowering the educators

One of the most innovative aspects of the new center is its focus on "Arts Integration" training. The facility will host year-round

workshops for New Orleans public school teachers, coaching them on how to weave drawing, movement, and theater into standard Common Core subjects.

Research conducted by the organization shows that students in arts-integrated classrooms see a significant boost in engagement and standardized test scores, particularly in literacy and problem-solving. By training the teachers, KID smART hopes to ripple their impact far beyond the walls of the Tremé center.

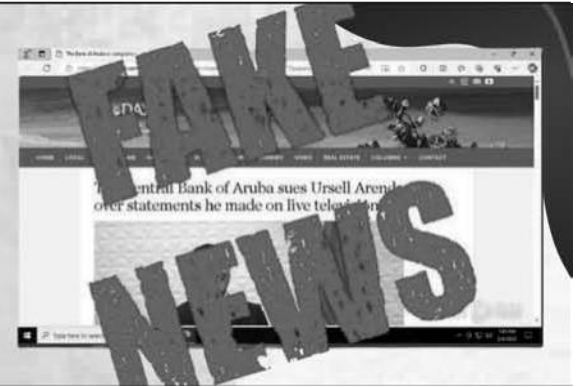
The grand finale

The grand opening concluded with a performance by students from nearby elementary schools, who used percussion and spoken word to tell the story of the neighborhood's resilience. □

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Day of reckoning arrives for social media after U.S. court loss



Relatives of victims, including Lori Schott (R) and Amy Neville (L), walk out of the Los Angeles Superior Court holding portraits of their children in Los Angeles, on March 25, 2026.

New York, United States

A Los Angeles jury's ruling that Meta and YouTube contributed to a teenage girl's depression marks a potential turning point in the years-long legal battle against social media giants -- one that could carry an enormous price tag.

The civil court on Tuesday found Meta and YouTube's parent Google liable for failing to adequately warn young people about the risks of excessive use of their Instagram and YouTube apps, respectively, even though they were aware of the dangers.

Both Meta and YouTube said Wednesday that they planned to appeal the California verdict.

A separate jury in Santa Fe, New Mexico, earlier this week found Meta liable for endangering minor users of Facebook and Instagram.

- Billions on the line -

Meta was quick to note that compensatory damages in the Los Angeles case totalled just \$3 million, with a further \$3 million in punitive damages awarded by the jury Wednesday. In New Mexico, the company was ordered to pay \$375 million in penalties, a

verdict it said it would appeal.

The rulings could ripple across hundreds of pending lawsuits against social media companies facing similar allegations, with the total liability potentially running into the billions of dollars.

"Bellwether trials like this one serve as signals about how juries respond to specific theories of harm," said Daryl Lim, a law professor at Pennsylvania State University.

He added that the verdict "should increase the pressure" on platforms to settle outstanding cases.

Snap and TikTok settled with the plaintiff in the Los Angeles case before the trial began, sidestepping a jury entirely.

- Self-regulation -

The cases center on users like Kaley G.M., the plaintiff in the Los Angeles case, who said she developed depression, chronic anxiety and body image issues from early and intense exposure to social media. Researchers have increasingly linked such sufferings to heavy social media use among adolescents.

"For years, social media

companies have claimed they're hard at work making their platforms safer for kids and teenagers," said Minda Smiley, an analyst at eMarketer. "Critics have long been skeptical."

"This verdict could mark the start of a difficult new chapter for social platforms -- one where the rules they write for themselves no longer cut it," she added.

Vanitha Swaminathan, a marketing professor at the University of Pittsburgh, said the ruling exposed "an important tension between the goals of the platform companies and the issues it poses for some of its most vulnerable consumers."

- New crack in Section 230 -

For year, US platforms have sheltered behind Section 230, a legal provision shielding them from liability for content posted by their users.

But lawyers for Kaley G.M. chose a different battlefield: the design of the platforms themselves, which they argued were engineered to trap and addict young users.

The strategy amounts to a "narrowing" of Section 230 that offers "alternative pathways to liability," said Lim at Pennsylvania State University.

- Legislative pressure builds -

The Los Angeles and Santa Fe cases are part of a broader wave of legal and regulatory action that gathered pace after Australia moved last year to ban social media for people under 16.

Several US states have since passed or are weighing their own legislation to protect minors online, though none has set a hard minimum age. □

Trump adds Columbus statue, walkway in latest White House makeover



A statue of the explorer Christopher Columbus, placed by US President Donald Trump, stands near the White House at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building (EEOB) in Washington, DC, on March 23, 2026.

Washington, United States

U.S. President Donald Trump has continued his makeover of the White House, adding a statue of Christopher Columbus and laying new black granite paving stones on the famed West Wing colonnade.

The marble figure of Columbus, the 15th-century Italian explorer who forged a reputation for brutality in his voyages to the New World, is a replica of one toppled by anti-racism protesters in the city of Baltimore in 2020. "Christopher Columbus was the original American hero and one of the most gallant and visionary men to ever walk the face of the Earth," Trump said in a letter dated Sunday to an Italian-American organization that gifted the statue.

It appeared without fanfare on Sunday in a courtyard in front of the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, a part of the White House campus in Washington.

Last year Trump, a Republican, signed a proclamation for the annual Columbus Day holiday, forgoing a similar honor for Indigenous American history introduced under his Democratic predecessor, Joe Biden.

Separately, Trump said

he was replacing the decades-old sandstone paving stones in the colonnade, the pillared walkway that leads from the main White House mansion to the Oval Office.

"It's a great contrast. The white, with the black," Trump told reporters as he showed them the ongoing work after a ceremony to swear in new the Homeland Security secretary, Markwayne Mullin.

"It's a beautiful, black granite."

Asked who was paying for the new walkway, Trump replied: "Me."

Trump has turned the once sparsely decorated colonnade into a "Presidential Walk of Fame" complete with gold-framed portraits and scathing captions about some of his predecessors.

The colonnade runs alongside the Rose Garden, where Trump paved over the grass last year.

It has provided the backdrop for iconic photos of US presidents for decades and is often dubbed the "45-second commute" as it takes the commander-in-chief from the Oval Office to private quarters. □

Exotic pet trade thrives in China despite welfare concerns

Beijing, China

Pet lovers eagerly gathered around a container to snap photos of meerkats at a Beijing animal fair, each selling for \$320, while nearby a raccoon nervously paced in a cage only slightly bigger than itself.

Throngs of people from across China packed into the cavernous exhibition halls for the annual pet fair, where exotic animals are a more common sight than cats or dogs.

The exotic pet industry is experiencing rapid growth with a market nearing 10 billion yuan (\$1.45 billion), Chinese state media have said.

Approximately 17.07 million people in China have exotic pets, Xinhua reported last year, and animal rights groups have raised concerns about welfare standards.

Unconventional pets are particularly popular among young people, with videos on how to raise them widely shared on social media platforms.

An 18-year-old putting down a deposit for a meerkat told AFP he was confident it would be easier to raise the animal than his previous cats and dogs.

"I feel that raising exotic pets is really just child's play by comparison," said



A visitor shows his pet snake at a pet fair in Beijing on March 19, 2026.

Xiong, who had travelled to Beijing from Jiangxi province.

He had previously bought a sugar glider a nocturnal palm-sized possum sold at the same store and said he found raising exotic pets easier as they did not feel separation anxiety as dogs do.

It was "quite a hassle-free" experience, Xiong said.

"When you want to interact, it's happy to engage with you, but when you're not in the mood, it's perfectly content playing by itself," he told AFP.

- Reptilian rapport -

In another part of the fair, patterned snakes and spotted geckos squirmed in round plastic containers as people shopped for their latest reptile.

Yang Xurui brought his green Argentine snake to the fair, where he told AFP he was searching for new exotic pets.

"I consider her a friend of mine," said Yang, 24, caressing the slithering creature hanging around his neck.

"Every day, the moment

I walk through the door, she stands tall and straight like a giant green onion to welcome me home," he added.

"She keeps me company while I watch TV, and then, come evening, she goes off to bed on her own marking the end of our day together."

Yang said he feels a certain sense of responsibility to dispel commonplace fear of snakes as pets.

"I want to tell everyone that she isn't terrible, that she isn't something to be feared."

China's Ministry of State Security has warned against the exotic pet craze it says is driven by trend-seekers.

"The trade, rearing, medical treatment, and abandonment of these exotic animals harbour latent safety risks," it said last year, adding that this warrants "serious attention".

Animal welfare regulations, however, remain lax in China, where pets such as fish, birds and pigs are commonly sold even in shopping malls.

The pandemic, meanwhile, sparked fears that animals may be carriers of diseases including Covid-19, which was widely believed to have originated in bats.

- Lack of knowledge -

Authorities in China should target the traders, breeders, and retailers who depend on the business -- and its expansion -- for profit, said Peter Li, a specialist in China's animal protection policy at the University of Houston-Downtown.

Businesses engaged in the sale and transport of exotic animals have reportedly used fraudulent labeling, withheld critical information, and engaged in deliberate deception to move these animals through supply chains, Li told AFP. □

Skeleton which could be of musketeer d'Artagnan found in Netherlands

Amsterdam, Netherlands

A skeleton which could belong to d'Artagnan, the French soldier who inspired the novel *The Three Musketeers*, has been discovered in a church in the Dutch city where he died centuries ago, local media reported Wednesday.

The skeleton was found in Maastricht, in the nave of a modern church whose origins date back to at least the 13th century, during repairs related to a partial floor collapse in February, explained L1 Nieuws, a media outlet in the province of Limburg.

Charles de Batz de Castelmoré, known as

d'Artagnan, the famous musketeer of Kings Louis XIII and Louis XIV, spent his life in the service of the French crown.

The Gascon nobleman inspired Alexandre Dumas's hero in *The Three Musketeers* in the 19th century, a character now known worldwide thanks to the novel and numerous film adaptations.

D'Artagnan was killed during the siege of Maastricht in 1673. His final resting place has remained a mystery ever since.

A French coin was found near the skeleton in Maastricht, according to Deacon Jos Valke, who was

present during the initial excavation.

"Furthermore, the location of the grave indicates that this was an important person: the skeleton was found where the altar used to be, and only royalty or other important figures were buried under an altar at that time," he told L1 Nieuws.

The skeleton has been removed from the church and is now in an archaeological institute in Deventer in the east of the Netherlands, the outlet reported. A DNA sample was taken from the skeleton on March 13 and is currently being analysed in a laboratory in Munich.

Archaeologist Wim Dijkman has been searching for d'Artagnan's remains for 28 years.

"I'm always very cautious, I'm a scientist. But I have high expectations," he told L1 Nieuws. □



The statue of d'Artagnan is seen in Auch with the Armagnac tower in the background (R) in Auch, southwestern France, on July 11, 2025.

Ex-midwife enthroned as first female Archbishop of Canterbury

Canterbury, United Kingdom

A former nurse made history Wednesday when she was enthroned as Archbishop of Canterbury, the first woman to lead the centuries-old mother church of the world's 85 million-strong Anglican community.

Sarah Mullally, 63, formally steps into the role after an abuse scandal led to the departure of her predecessor.

The former midwife was formally installed in the historic ceremony at Canterbury Cathedral in southeast England in front of around 2,000 people including heir to the throne Prince William and his wife Catherine.

In accordance with tradition, the ceremony began with Mullally knocking three times with a staff on the cathedral's west door to request admission.

Dressed in deep yellow-gold robes, she was greeted by local school children who asked why she had been sent.

"I am sent as archbishop to serve you, to proclaim the love of Christ and with you to worship and love him with heart and soul,



Archbishop of Canterbury Sarah Mullally smiles following her installation ceremony at Canterbury Cathedral, south-east England on March 25, 2026.

mind and strength," she responded.

The ceremony then culminated with Mullally being seated in two different thrones.

The seats symbolise the dual responsibilities of the role as a bishop in the diocese of Canterbury and as the spiritual leader of Anglicans worldwide.

Mullally's predecessor Justin Welby announced his resignation as head of the

Church of England in November 2024 over failures in handling an abuse scandal.

He stepped down after a report found the Church of England had covered up a 1970s serial abuse case and that he failed to report the abuses to authorities when they came to his attention in 2013.

- Chief nurse -

Mullally has stressed her

commitment to "do all I can to ensure that the Church becomes safer and also responds well to victims and survivors of abuse."

The church was "seeking to become more trauma informed, listening to survivors and victims of abuse", she said in an interview with the BBC this week.

The Church of England became the country's state establishment church following King Henry VIII's split

from the Roman Catholic Church in the 1530s.

The British monarch is its supreme governor, while the Archbishop of Canterbury is seen as the spiritual leader of Anglicans worldwide. Mullally, who is married with two children, becomes the 106th Archbishop of Canterbury, the first having been appointed in the late sixth century.

She worked in Britain's state-run National Health Service for more than three decades, rising to become its chief nursing officer for England in 1999.

Ordained a priest in 2002, she became the first female Bishop of London in 2018, only four years after the church began allowing women bishops after years of bitter factional wrangling.

Some churches around the Anglican world have long permitted women bishops, with the first appointed in the United States in 1989.

Others, however, remain opposed such as the Archbishop of the Anglican Church of Rwanda, Laurent Mbanda.□

Goat vs gecko: A tiny Caribbean island faces wildlife showdown

Terre-de-Haut, France

The tiny Caribbean island of Terre-de-Haut boasts pristine turquoise waters and deserted coves. It also has goats, hundreds of them.

There are as many goats as humans on the island and, while they charm the tourists as they roam on the beaches and graze in the gardens, there is a darker side to this uncontrolled feral herd.

They ravage protected areas, munch through vegetation and destroy the habitats of other animals some of which are endangered and endemic to Terre-de-Haut and other islands in Les Saintes archipelago.

Officials on the island chain, which is part of the French overseas territory of Guadeloupe, are now considering drastic action.

The animals could be shunted into designated grazing areas then, after health checks are carried out, they could be used for meat.

Marie Robert of the French Office for Biodiversity (OFB), a government body, told AFP the situa-

tion was alarming.

"On Terre-de-Haut alone, the herd is estimated at least one goat per inhabitant, or about 1,500," she said.

"They overconsume native plants, leaving all the space to more resilient invasive exotic species."



Goats walk on Pompierre Beach in Terre-de-Haut, Les Saintes, on the French Caribbean island of Guadeloupe, on March 18, 2026.

- Species at risk -

At Le Chameau, the highest point on Terre-de-Haut, the vegetation is devastated -- trees stripped bare and branches gnawed away.

Robert said the destruction wrought by the goats raised the risk of landslides and threatened animal biodiversity.

Several endemic species are particularly at risk, including the Terre-de-Haut racer snake, the Guadeloupe skink and a tiny brightly coloured gecko called Les Saintes Sphaerodactylus.

It's feared that these species, already weakened by rats and stray dogs and cats, could disappear entirely.

The OFB is tapping the EU's fund for environmental projects, the LIFE programme, to help.

It has an estimated budget of 10 million euros to protect reptiles in Guadeloupe and the nearby islands of Saint-Martin and Saint-Barthelemy, which face similar pressures.

"It involves eradicating species like rats, but also bringing goats under control," said Philippe De Proft, a coastal warden in Les Saintes for nearly 20 years.

- A new scourge? -

The goats were brought over by humans and were used for many years as the only local source of meat. But tourism has long since displaced livestock farming as a way of life.

The goats, however, have not stopped reproducing a female can give birth to two or three kids several times a year.

The authorities are looking to Saint-Barthelemy for inspiration.□

Cas di Torto

Cas di torto (also called cas di lodo or cas di bara) is a traditional building technique from Aruba. It refers to a type of houses made of mud with rounded corners. These houses were usually found around the plantations. The few structures that still exist are the oldest structures that are left standing in the country.

The technique probably came over from the Venezuelan Paraguaná Peninsula in the 18th century. Existing houses date back

150 years. Until 1925 many houses on Aruba were built using this technique, afterwards it fell into disuse. In 2005 there were 62 cas di torto houses left, of which only four were in good condition.

The skeleton of the houses is made up of round wooden poles placed with distances of 1.5 feet between them. Branches are interwoven between them, completing the structural support. On this basis, loam is applied, mixed with sand,



Prohibited by law: leaving the island with seashells, white sand or corals

(Oranjestad)—Often times, the customs department at the airport intercepts many tourists leaving the island with seashells, white sand and/or corals as souvenirs.

Conforming to the international treaty of CITES and our local law which protects our Flora & Fauna, it is absolutely prohibited to take any seashell, sand and coral outside of Aruba. This is to protect our environment. The high number of seashells, coral

and amount of sand confiscated is very strange and it is suspected that our own locals are the ones selling these to the tourists, which is unacceptable.

Upon confiscation at the airport, you can also face a fine that you have to pay before leaving. This would surely not be a pleasant experience. Though we love to accommodate our visitors, let's all give nature the respect it deserves by protecting our environment. Stop collecting seashells, white sand and corals from our shores and stop buying or accepting these from local sellers or companies.

We want our future generations and visitors to enjoy the beauty of our beaches, shells and corals in a sustainable way, without destroying or disrupting the Aruban ecosystem. Help us protect what is ours! □



water and paragrass. This is then coated with aloe vera juice, which gives the white color and helps to protect against the weather.

On top of the poles pieces of wood are fitted that serve as the base for the roof beams. Until 1815 the roofing usually consisted of corn (maize) stems, af-

terwards the nuclei of columnar cacti were used. The floor is made of loam, mixed with cement or cow dung.

The houses were usually divided into a kitchen, a living room, a porch and a bedroom. In the kitchen would be a wooden or metal barrel for storing water that

was collected in small rain ponds. Around this barrel a thick loam wall would be erected. Often large families would live in these houses; people would sleep on mats on the floor.

If you visit the Arikok National Park you will be able to see a very nice cas di torto. □

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Don't miss out on L'Avenue's Early Bird Special!



(Oranjestad)—Up to grab an early dinner after a day of shopping or cruising? Take advantage of L'Avenue's Early Bird Special, and experience their innovative twist of traditional Belgian cuisine!

Located in a cozy nook at The Cove Mall—a short walking distance from the Holiday Inn and Paseo Herencia, this Belgian and French bistro offers a delicious and rich menu available through lunch and dinner from 11am to 10pm. Enjoy your lunch and/or dinner in a cool, air-conditioned interior area of the restaurant, accompanied by the warm lights and chic design that emphasizes the restaurant's laid-back, yet sophisticated ambience.

Lunch includes a variety of sandwiches—with a healthy selection of bread options—if you're going for a light meal, but just like their dinner selection, also includes



steak, chicken, fish, and even mussels and rabbit if you're craving a bit more of L'Avenue's exquisite menu. And let's not forget their wide selection of Belgian beer and European wine to complete the tasty experience!

But that's not all! L'Avenue is offering their guests their Early Bird Special, available

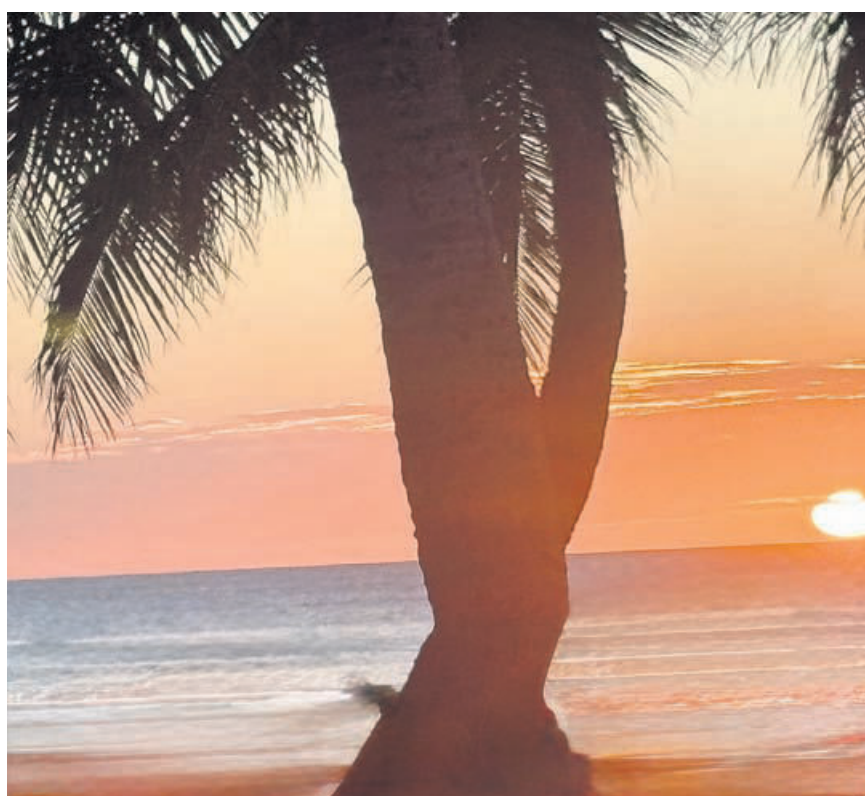
every day from 4pm to 7pm. Enjoy this affordable and delectable 3-course meal special at a comfortable price of \$32 per guest, including a glass of house wine.

L'Avenue honors and takes pride in serving the traditional Belgian and French flavors, but does not shy away from offering a flexible menu for their guests' needs. That's right, L'Avenue also offers to cater for their guests' dietary restrictions, making sure that each guest gets well taken care of!



More information

L'Avenue is situated at The Cove Mall in Palm Beach and is open every day from 11am to 10pm for lunch and dinner. To book a reservation or ask for more information, please contact their phone line at +297 6996400, send an e-mail info@lavenuearuba.com, or visit their website at lavenuearuba.com □



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Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from Rosemarie Chrzanowski from New Jersey, USA. She wrote to us saying: "Aruba to me is serenity!"

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers! □

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Beaches for the whole family to enjoy!

(Oranjestad)—One of the biggest concerns that parents have when traveling with their children is a guarantee of their safety and healthy enjoyment. Therefore, we thought it would be a great help to traveling parents to list off some the most family-friendly beaches around the island.

Baby Beach in San Nicolas
Baby Beach is one Aruba's most popular and visited beaches, and for good reason: This sandy and quiet lagoon is a great place for parents to sit back and relax while their children play in the shallow shores of the beach. Beside the relaxing atmosphere, there are also

several services that may accommodate your stay, like a parking lot, sun tent rentals, chairs, bathrooms and a snack bar right at the far left of the beach.

Mangel Halto in Pos Chiquito

Mangel Halto is situated in the back streets of Pos Chiquito. Though there are several stairs on the sides of the beach cliff leading you down, the best spot for families to hang out is across the bridge, passed the mangrove trees near the entrance sign. Here, there are small and big palapas, perfect for big and small families to set up their belongings. In this

area, the shore is also shallow, falling right around your knee before slowly getting deeper: perfect for kids to safely play.

Eagle Beach/Palm Beach

Yet another highly popular beach sites, Eagle Beach and Palm Beach is where most of our visitors go to tan, swim or play in the white sand. Because they are near the low-rise and high-rise hotel areas, these beaches are the most accessible for visitors on foot. These beaches also offer many palapas free to use, but you can also rent chairs and tents. Much like Baby Beach, these sites are one of the best beaches for



your children to play and build sand castles.

Boca Catalina in Malmok

Boca Catalina is a small bay beach near the Malmok beach area further down the hotel areas. Though it may not be a very sandy

beach, it is relatively quiet and tranquil. This is a great place for family to lay down a big blanket and have a little picnic. This is also one of the best places to snorkel, as this area is filled with little fish and corals, even close to the shore. □

Birds of Aruba

ORANJESTAD — On May 11th, 2010, the Aruba Bird-life Conservation was founded with the aim of protecting the biodiversity in general and birds in and around Aruba in particular.

Among other things, the

foundation will focus on increasing the survival chances of species of wild birds by promoting their preservation and conservation. The foundation publishes the most beautiful pictures of local birds on their social media that show us the beauty of Aruba's birds and nature in general. Aruba Today gives you a little peek with the following pictures and descriptions from the foundation's Facebook page.

The Great Egret

Serenity in Aruba's National Park, a Great Egret flying in peace. When it is peaceful and quite, beautiful things start happening in nature.

Canadian in the house

The breeding season is over and it's getting pretty cold

in North America. Shore birds have started moving southwards as early as July. This wetland beauty wants to keep its toes warm. Our Canadian friends know exactly where they can do so best. A Greater Yellowlegs rediscovering Aruba's Bubali Wetlands.

Cabochon

In its living form of so much more value than any gemstone. Aruba's smallest and most master of flight. A top pollinator. A hovering Blenchi inspecting the human who just entered his territory. English: Blue-tailed Emerald (male) Dutch: Blauwstaartsmaragdkolibrie (mannelijke).

Aruba's to enjoy. Aruba's to protect. □



The district of Savaneta: A quick history guide to the island's first capital

(Oranjestad)—Before Oranjestad became the island nation's capital, Aruba's first capital was the district of Savaneta. Here is where the cultural identity of Aruba was born, and from where the rest of the island developed into what it is today.

Savaneta is said to have been the first place where the Caquetio inhabitants first stepped foot on the island. Though there isn't hard evidence to back this up, but considering the legend of the Cacique Arua, it is believed that there were already movements on Aruba—and Savaneta—around 88 AD.

The Caquetios probably made their way to the island either from Venezuela,

Colombia or other Caribbean islands in the region, but with good weather it was relatively easy for them to travel back and forth in their canoes. So, since the Caquetios discovered the island, Aruba found her first form of civilization.

It wasn't until 1499 when Aruba met another group of people who set foot on the island: the Spanish explorer Alonso de Ojeda. De Ojeda first took notice of Aruba off the coast of Venezuela, during his exploration of the Latin American country. This was on August 9th, 1499. However, de Ojeda didn't actually sail to the island till 4 days later, on August 23rd, 1499. This was the beginning of the Spanish era on Aruba (1499-1636).



Alonso usually didn't stop at every island or land he saw, especially not in the Caribbean. He would often take notice of land from afar and continue sailing. However, Aruba was an exception. He had heard that there were "quebracho"(Kibrahacha) trees on the island, which

were commonly used to produce dye or paint. But since these trees could not be found in Savaneta, he continued to search in the area of what is now known as Santa Cruz. The best way to transport the tree barks was via a route passing through Savaneta, and so the first road between Savaneta and Santa Cruz was made.

and business men, all of whom resided in Savaneta. This way, Savaneta officially became the island's first capital.

However, at the end of the 18th century, the commander at the time, J.R. Lauffer, moved his office to what is now "Horse Bay" in Oranjestad. Because the highest office on the island moved away from Savaneta, the capital lost its title to what was called then Playa.

How Savaneta got its name The name Savaneta probably has a Spanish origin. It was said that when the Spanish climbed a hill called Yara, they saw that the area was mostly open and had no big trees. In Spanish, such a land area is called a "sabana".

The Dutch colonial era (1636-1805)

During the 80-year war between The Netherlands and Spain, Dutch explorers and merchants began to travel to the ABC islands. Once they landed in Aruba, they deported the small Arawakan and Spanish community that was living on the island. This was the beginning of colonization of the ABC islands by the Dutch empire. Around the same, the West Indian Company (WIC) was born. Bonaire and Curacao were mostly used for plantations, where the Dutch had transported slaves from Africa. Aruba, on the other hand, was mostly used to raise cattle and to house the haring factory. The Dutch had often forced the indigenous community to work for them.

Because of its land surface, Savaneta was a great place to construct cattle farms. From here, the farmer culture on Aruba was born. Before the Aruban Gold Rush and the construction of the Refinery in San Nicolas, most residents were farmers, and Savaneta had many inhabitants that farmed fruits and vegetables. They also continued the tradition of raising cattle, like goat, sheep, pigs and horses. Savaneta was one of the first places on the island to have a general farming culture. From this culture, many other traditions were born, like the Dera Gay Holiday that we celebrate every year on June 24th.□

Source: Historia di Savaneta (History of Savaneta) by Adolf "Dufi" Kock.

In 1636, when the Netherlands won the war against Spain, the country surrendered the islands to the Dutch.

The Dutch administration appointed the island's first commander, an Irish man named N. Williams. Because the Dutch were interested in other Caribbean islands and countries in South America, they imported Dutch merchants





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Lessons from our elders: Plants and fruits for medicinal use



(Oranjestad)— Though western medicine is now widely used for common illnesses and to keep our bodies healthy and happy, it is still very common in every household in Aruba (and around the world) to have staple home remedies that is passed on through generations. Here are some tips that our elders have passed on to us over the years.

Sweet potato

According to our elders, sweet potato is mostly useful for low blood pressure. People who suffer from low blood pressure were advised to eat sweet potato 2 to 3 times a week. However, if you have high blood pressure, it is best not to eat too much sweet potato, as this raises blood pressure. Sweet potatoes are also great for people who work hard labor jobs, and it's been

said to be aid blood circulation in the body, as well as help those with hemorrhoids or diarrhea.

Many of our elders opted to plant sweet potatoes themselves, mostly because of how easy it was to do so. Cut the end of a sweet potato let it sit in shallow water until it starts to sprout. Then you may plant it in the ground. Sweet potatoes need plenty of water to grow, especially in the first week in the ground. It was said that once you start to notice the ground crack underneath the flowers, it is time to harvest. This should happen around month 3.

Pomegranate

Pomegranates are also one of the easier fruits to plant and harvest. Originated from Persia, this plant can grow almost everywhere. In Aruba, there are many homes that have a tiny or big pomegranate tree. You may be wondering what the difference is between a small and big pomegranate tree, for which the answer is based on harvest time. Tiny trees produce tinier pomegranates that can be harvested early on. Contrarily, big



trees produce bigger pomegranates, but they need enough time to fully ripen before harvesting, otherwise you might end up with bitter seeds. Pomegranate trees are also very easy to plant. In essence, if you just throw the seeds on the ground, they could grow into a tree.

In terms of medicinal use, pomegranate skins are said to have a few benefits for our health. Ac-

cording to customs, pomegranate skin tea can help those that suffer from diarrhea. Dried pomegranate skin tea is also good for people who have worms. Pomegranate flowers can be boiled to make a drink and this can be used for irritated gums; just take a swig and let the tea sit in your mouth for a couple minutes. □

Source: Remedi i Kustumber di nos Bieunan (Medicine and Customs of our Elderly) by Dinah Veeris

Meet an Aruban trailblazers: Padu Lampe



(Oranjestad)—This week we remember one of our most beloved Aruban giant, Juan Chabaya Lampe—better known as Padu Lampe or Padu del Caribe. As one of the most important and renowned artists in the Aruban cultural sphere, Padu's long career led him to be honored today as "the father of culture."

On April 26th, 1920, Juan Chabaya Lampe "Padu Lampe/Padu del Caribe" was born in Nassaustra, Oranjestad. He grew up in a happy musical environment, and it is because of this that he developed a love for music.

Starting from the age of 12, he was agile in the clarinet, mandolin and cunatro. Henry Lampe, his father, was also a well-known pianist and musician.

In a publication of the informative seminar, "Observer", from august 1st, 1962, Padu's many merits and friendly personality stood out. It was said that he was an excellent pianist with a personal style and full of surprises. Secondly, though the composer was not too familiar with music theory, he showed innovations in his compositions. Lastly, Padu was a promoter of Creole music around the world.

One of the most important moments in Aruban history, in which he was able to witness first-hand, was the first radio broadcast on the island on March 20th, 1954. Here, he was accompanied by Antillean guitarist Julian Coco and Hubert "Loi" Booi.

In the art world, Padu was also a known painter. During his youth, he made several painting using his unique style. In 1939, he participated in an art exhibit in New York, where he won a bronze medal for his painting "Typical View of Aruba."

Padu remained a popular artist within the Dutch Antilles and the Caribbean as a pianist, singer, author and painter. Padu Lampe was a local artist who

became renowned in Venezuela, Colombia, The U.S. and The Netherlands too. In the 1950s, he sold no less than 50 thousand copies of his long-playing albums (LPs).

Padu Lampe was a multifaceted artist, inspired by his interest in parapsychology and supernatural phenomenon. He wrote three books in Papiamentu on the subject in 1986, which was published by the Aruban National Printing Press with sponsorship provided by the Prince Bernhard Funds Netherlands Antilles.

Besides that, Padu passed his exam on "Society to Advanced Ethical Hypnosis" in 1964 in New Jersey. He received a certificate as a hypnotechnician, which gave him the authority to practice hypnosis in some states.

Over the course of his career, he received many accolades and awards in Aruba, Curacao, Venezuela and the Netherlands.

Padu del Caribe passed away on November 29th, 2019, at the age of 99 years old. Padu brought the Aruban culture around the world. His legacy will remain ingrained in the Aruban cultural history, and he will be known forever as one of the most influential trailblazers of our community.

Padu will always be in Aruba's heart, because he had composed various special songs dedicated to the mothers of the island; his song "Sonrisa di un baby" ("A baby's Smile") has been written in three different languages. Padu also wrote our national anthem "Aruba Dushi Tera", along with Mr. Rufo Wever. This song was approved by the government of Aruba and was named the official anthem of the island in 1976.

Other songs that have been considered as being almost a second anthem for Arubans is the special composition he wrote for his wife Daisy Croes called "Abo so". Daisy later passed away in 1994. □

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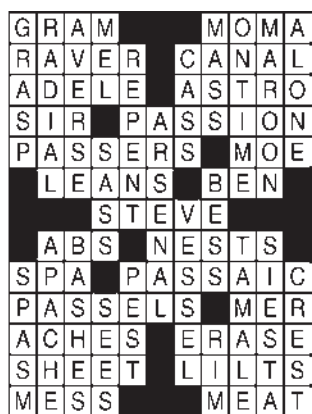
By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

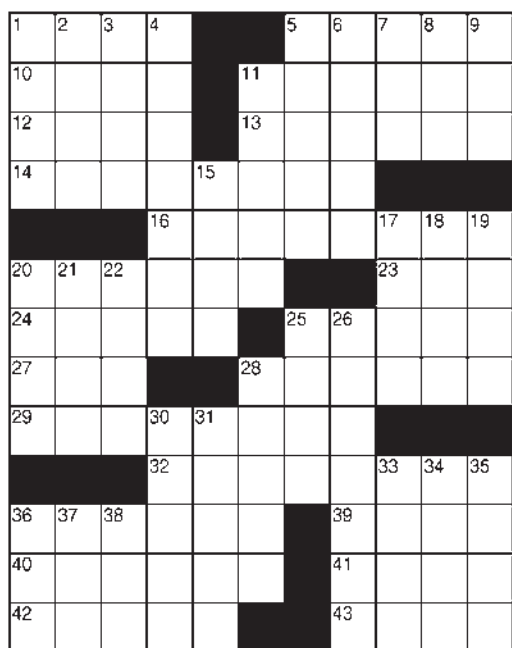
- 1 Bunches
5 Small herring
10 Stubbs of the Four Tops
11 Tough situation
12 Perfect place
13 Made up
14 Curbside noise-maker
16 Arctic regions
20 Gentle touch
23 Pitching stat
24 Follows orders
25 Intense beam
27 CEO's deg.
28 Like some lines
29 Spot for a shot
32 Base for shingles
36 Missis-sippi port
39 Zilch
40 Loves to pieces
41 Shade
42 Recesses
43 Woeful cry

DOWN

- 1 Guinness of film



- 2 Pollux's mother
3 Finished
4 "30 Rock" star
5 Derision
6 First-rate
7 Operated
8 King Kong, for one
9 TV's Danson
11 Battle reminders
15 High-lands girl
17 Take a breather
18 Grove growth
19 Knotty
20 Rooster topper
21 "Fer-nando" group
22 Bring up
25 Aero-batics feat
26 Hawks' home
28 Day in Holly-wood
30 Long-legged bird
31 April headache
33 Sandbox toy
34 Writer Ferber
35 "Dog-gone!"
36 Outlaw
37 Marital promise
38 Old card game



4-6

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

4-6 CRYPTOQUOTE

GVDRA IVBL VZ KVRB HLXBL

UQCZ VZ KVRB HVRSU, CZH

UQL HBLCI YXMM UCPL DCBL

VG XUALMG. — ICBP UYCXZ

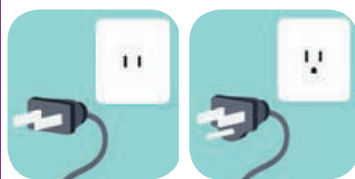
Cryptoquote: I LOVE PASSOVER BECAUSE FOR ME IT IS A CRY AGAINST INDIFFERENCE, A CRY FOR COMPASSION. — ELIE WIESEL

Cruise ship Schedule: March 23 - 31 2026

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
MON	23	MARELLA DISCOVERY 2	08.00	20.00	C	1
TUE	24	NORWEGIAN SKY	13.30	22.30	C	1
		OASIS OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	I	1
WED	25	SERENADE OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL VISTA	13.00	23.00	C	1
FRI	27	REGAL PRINCESS	09.00	22.00	C	1
MON	30	EXPLORA II	09.00	18.00	C	1
TUE	31	CARNIVAL HORIZON	08.00	22.00	B	1
		AIDABLU	11.30	22.00	C	1
		NORWEGIAN SKY	13.30	22.30	I	1
		FREEWINDS	09.30	****	E	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.



Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.



Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

	2		1	9		7		4
7				3				
	3		5		6			9
	8		2	1		9		
		7	8		3		1	
		2		6			4	
	4			8			7	
				2				
9		3	6		1	5		

Difficulty: ★★★

3/26

Answer to previous puzzle

3	8	6	1	2	4	9	5	7
4	5	9	3	8	7	2	6	1
7	2	1	6	5	9	4	8	3
9	4	5	7	3	2	6	1	8
1	6	8	9	4	5	7	3	2
2	3	7	8	1	6	5	9	4
8	9	4	5	7	1	3	2	6
6	7	3	2	9	8	1	4	5
5	1	2	4	6	3	8	7	9

Difficulty: ★★★

3/25

Oldest dog DNA suggests 16,000 years of human companionship



VIEW TAKEN ON JUNE 8, 2001 of the skeletons of a sailor and a dog at the Pisa archeological site where the regional conservation workshop Nucleart of Grenoble (ARC) has been participating since April in the rescue of three Roman-era boats along with 13 other vessels in the Pisa river port

Paris, France

The discovery of the oldest ever dog DNA suggests they have been our best friends for nearly 16,000 years -- 5,000 years earlier than had previously been thought, new research said Wednesday. Despite being ubiquitous in the homes, backyards and hearts of people across the world, surprisingly little is known about where dogs come from. "It's just an interesting mystery," Swedish geneticist Pontus Skoglund of the UK's Francis Crick Institute told reporters. Dogs are most likely a mix of two types of grey wolves, he said. However exactly when dogs diverged from wolves has been difficult to trace, partly because their ancient bones are tricky to tell apart.

That is why scientists behind two new studies published in the journal Nature sequenced the genomes from archaeological remains, shedding light on the elusive origins of our furry friends. The first study revealed that the world's oldest canine DNA was discovered in a piece of a skull in Pinarbasi in what is now Turkey. The female puppy, which was perhaps "a few months old", probably looked like a small wolf when it lived roughly 15,800 years ago, according to study co-author Laurent Frantz of the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich. Before Wednesday, the oldest-known dog DNA was from 10,900 years ago. Also breaking that record was genetic evidence the team found in south-

west England dating back 14,300 years, which illustrated how early dogs had spread across Europe. Frantz said scientists could not prove exactly what role these dogs had among humans living during the last Ice Age. "But I think we can assume that they must have played a role because they would have been expensive to feed," he said. Perhaps the dogs were used for hunting or protection, he speculated. Even if these dogs were not treated the same as pets are today, there was likely still a strong bond, he said, adding that "kids will still have played with puppies". □

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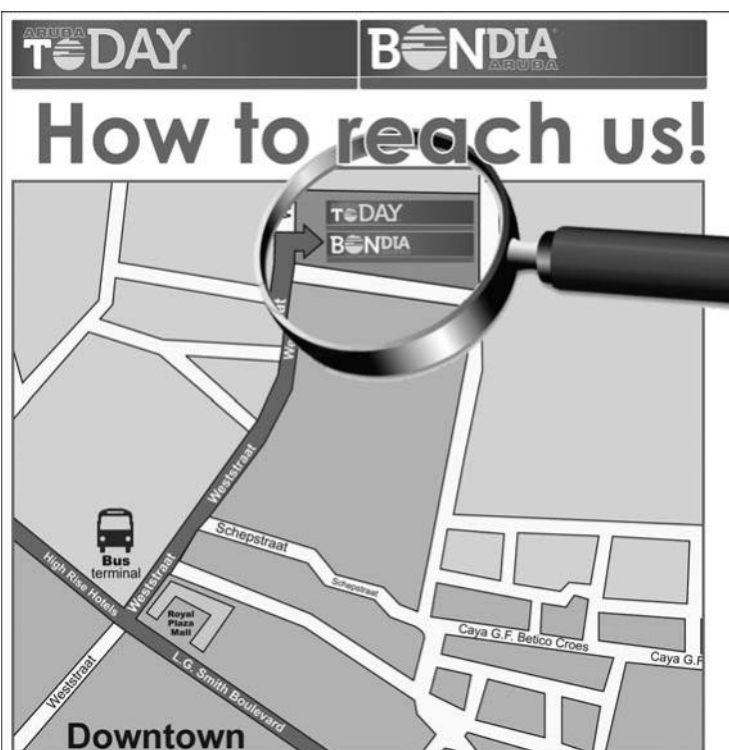
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ARUBA TODAY NEWS



Ex-Google chief Matt Brittin made new BBC director-general

London, United Kingdom

The BBC named a former Google executive with no television or journalism experience as its next director-general Wednesday.

The long-expected appointment of Matt Brittin to the high-profile role comes as the under-fire British broadcaster faces drastic shifts in the media landscape and a \$10-billion lawsuit brought by US President Donald Trump.

Brittin, 57, said he was honoured to be appointed at a "moment of real risk, yet also real opportunity".

"Now, more than ever, we need a thriving BBC that works for everyone in a complex, uncertain and fast-changing world," he added.

The British-born executive was president for over a decade of Google's Europe, Middle East and Africa division, which earns around a third of its revenue. He had previously worked as a consultant for McKinsey.

Samir Shah, chairman of the BBC board, said Brittin "brings to the BBC deep experience of leading a high-profile and highly-complex organisation through transformation."

He "is an outstanding leader and has the skills needed to navigate the organisation through the many changes taking place in



Google's EMEA business and operations president Matt Brittin, gives an interview during the 2017 Web Summit in Lisbon on November 9, 2017.

the media market," Shah added.

Brittin's name has been circulating in the UK media for weeks, after the current director-general, Tim Davie resigned in November over the editing of a documentary about Trump.

The Times wrote that appointing a tech executive with no broadcasting experience "has raised some eyebrows".

"While his experience in the world of big tech could be an advantage, Mr Brittin will have to quickly demonstrate a commitment to public service broadcasting," opposition lawmaker

Caroline Dinenage told the daily.

A columnist at the right-wing Daily Telegraph wrote that Brittin was "just what the BBC doesn't need: a new Lefty boss".

Davie, who has held the BBC post since 2020, will step down on April 2, and Brittin will take on the challenging role on May 18.

The BBC had described it as one of "the most important, high-profile public posts in the UK". Brittin stepped down from Google last year after 18 years saying he wanted a break.

- 'Dr Who' fan -

Last year he became a fellow of the Royal Television Society, which hands out prestigious awards.

In his acceptance speech he admitted to "imposter syndrome".

He voiced admiration for the British television industry he had "been trying to get into for a very long time", saying his favourite shows included cult BBC sci-fi series "Doctor Who".

Brittin updated his LinkedIn profile on Wednesday after the appointment was announced, saying "Got a job" and "Gap year: completed".

He grew up in southern Eng-

land and was educated at the University of Cambridge, but he has said his late father grew up in a small shop in London with "BBC wireless (radio) for news and entertainment". He represented Great Britain at the Olympics as a rower after competing in the university Boat Race against Oxford as a student.

Early in his career he worked at Trinity Mirror newspaper group, now called Reach, in non-journalistic roles.

Last year he was made a CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire) for services to technology and digital skills.

- 'Under pressure' -

The BBC said earlier this month it had formally asked a US federal court in Florida to dismiss Trump's lawsuit over the editing of a speech he gave to supporters ahead of the US Capitol riot in 2021 in a BBC documentary.

The film was "never aired in Florida -- or the US" or available to stream there on any platform, a BBC spokesperson said.

Brittin takes up the job at a politically sensitive time for the BBC, which is due to renegotiate the Royal Charter that outlines the corporation's governance. Its current charter will end next year. □

Internet providers not liable for music piracy by users: top U.S. court

Washington, United States

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled on Wednesday in a landmark copyright case that internet service providers (ISPs) are not liable

for online pirating of music by their users.

Cox Communications, a major broadband ISP, had asked the top court to throw out a jury verdict

awarding \$1 billion in damages to Sony Music Entertainment and other record labels. Cox was accused in the case of failing to take action against customers accused of illegally downloading copyrighted music.

In a unanimous 9-0 ruling, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Cox and said an ISP was liable "only if it intended that the provided service be used for infringement."

"A company is not liable as a copyright infringer for merely providing a service to the general public with knowledge that it will be used by some to infringe copyrights," the court said

in an opinion written by Justice Clarence Thomas.

"Cox repeatedly discouraged copyright infringement by sending warnings, suspending services, and terminating accounts," the court said.

"A provider induces infringement if it actively encourages infringement through specific acts," it said. "Cox neither induced its users' infringement nor provided a service tailored to infringement."

Cox Communications welcomed the court's decision, calling it a "decisive victory for the broadband industry and for the American people who depend

on reliable internet service."

"This opinion affirms that internet service providers are not copyright police and should not be held liable for the actions of their customers," the company said in a statement.

The ruling was also welcomed by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), which called it a "win for freedom of expression online."

"If defined too broadly, secondary copyright liability for internet service providers can pose a serious threat to free speech online," Evelyn Danforth-Scott, an ACLU attorney, said in a statement. □



A sign is posted in front of a Verizon store on November 13, 2025 in San Francisco, California.

Gauff outlasts Bencic to reach Miami semi-finals

Miami, United States

Coco Gauff battled past Belinda Bencic to reach the semi-finals of the Miami Open for the first time on Tuesday with a gruelling 6-3, 1-6, 6-3 victory.

Fourth seed Gauff had considered skipping Miami after being forced to pull out during the fourth round at Indian Wells with a left-arm injury.

But the 22-year-old from Florida, who lives in nearby Delray Beach, was determined to play in what she considers to be her hometown tournament where she had never previously gone further than the last 16. Gauff's sense of determination was on full display at the Hard Rock

Stadium's main court on Tuesday as she weathered fluctuating form against the 12th-seeded Bencic to grind out victory.

"I honestly didn't think I would be in the semis so I'm really happy and proud of myself," Gauff said.

"I think I proved a lot to myself this week, and I feel like with each match I'm getting better.

"Even though I'm still playing three sets, I feel like the level is getting better and better."

Gauff, the French Open champion, will now face the Czech 13th seed Karolina Muchova in the last four as she chases her first Miami final appearance.

Gauff has won all five of her



Coco Gauff of the United States celebrates after defeating Belinda Bencic of Switzerland during day 8 of the Miami open at Hard Rock Stadium on March 24, 2026 in Miami Gardens, Florida.

previous matches against Muchova.

"You don't think about the head-to-head," Gauff said.

"There's so many matches that we play that could go

either way. I don't really think about it especially when I play here, because I know how good she is."

Muchova advanced to the last four earlier with a

7-5, 7-6 (7/5) defeat of Canadian 10th seed Victoria Mboko. The 29-year-old Muchova admitted she had everything to prove against Gauff. □

Knicks close on Celtics after Brunson's 32 points

Los Angeles, United States

Jalen Brunson scored 32 points as the New York Knicks stretched their winning streak to seven games with a 121-116 defeat of the New Orleans Pelicans on Tuesday.

Brunson was one of seven Knicks players to finish in double figures, with Karl Anthony-Towns and OG Anunoby finishing with 21 points apiece at Madison Square Garden.

The win saw the Knicks keep up the pressure on the Boston Celtics in the battle for the No.2 seed in the Eastern Conference playoff picture.

With less than three weeks of the regular season remaining, the Knicks are third in the East with a 48-25 record, a fraction behind the Celtics who are second on 47-24. Detroit lead the standings on 52-19.

Zion Williamson scored 22 points to lead the scoring for the Pelicans, who have been eliminated from playoff contention in the West.

In other games, Donovan Mitchell scored 42 points as the Cleveland Cavaliers edged the Orlando Magic 136-131. □



Jalen Brunson #11 of the New York Knicks reacts during the fourth quarter against the New Orleans Pelicans at Madison Square Garden on March 24, 2026 in New York City.

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U.S. ski star Shiffrin wins overall World Cup title for sixth time

Lillehammer, Norway
U.S. ski star Mikaela Shiffrin held off Emma Aicher to wrap up the overall World Cup title for a sixth time after Wednesday's season-ending giant slalom. Shiffrin, who previously won the big crystal globe in 2017, 2018, 2019, 2022 and 2023, needed to finish in the top 15 in Norway to again guarantee herself the big crystal globe. That meant the 31-year-old American finished with an insurmountable points tally over her closest rival, Germany's Aicher. Shiffrin finished the season with 1,386 points, while Aicher was second 87pts adrift. An astonishing return of 980 points out of a possible 1,000 in the slalom allied to her strong giant slalom ef-



USA's Mikaela Shiffrin reacts after her run in the Women's Super G race of the FIS Ski World Cup at the La Volata slope in the Passo San Pellegrino ski area, Val di Fassa, Italy on March 8, 2026.

orts including a podium in Spindleruv Mlyn plus two top 23 finishes in super-G were the bedrock to her winning tally.

"This thing sums up the whole season," said Shiffrin, who heaped praise on Aicher.

"Her skiing has been so cool. The outcome of this day is that she can do this. That's the coolest thing about ski racing, that anything is possible.

"I was in 17th position after the first run, and you don't get points in 17th here. So, I really could appreciate that this day could be different," Shiffrin said.

"It was a lot of effort to push on the second and I was really happy with my second run, much better timing. I felt much more fluid and just like kind of relaxed, even though I was actually quite stressed."

Shiffrin, whose sixth globe matched Austrian Annemarie Moser-Proell (1971-5, 1979), added: "I'm really, really grateful to be in this position.

"It's really a big emotion, but I'm also grateful for the fight."

Canada's Valerie Grenier claimed victory in the giant slalom, timing an aggregate of 2min 16.79sec. It was the Canadian team's first victory of the season in any discipline.

Norway's Mina Fuerst Holtmann was second, with Austrian Julia Scheib rounding out the podium. Scheib, the crystal globe winner for the discipline, finished the season with 720 points in the giant slalom, 209pts ahead of her closest challenger, Camille Rast of Switzerland.

Shiffrin eventually finished 11th in Wednesday's race, 2.02sec off Grenier's pace, while Aicher was one place behind the American.

The 22-year-old German ended her season not only second in the overall standings, but also second in downhill, third in super-G, sixth in slalom and having recorded her best ever result in the giant slalom a fourth-placed finish in Are. □



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